

the mortality from tuberculosis lies in selection—probably, in the first instance at least, not a selection enforced by legal penalties, but one due to the presence of an enlightened public opinion which will regard as morally reprehensible the fertile marriages of phthisical types.”

We are glad to end our review of Dr. Reid's book with an extract such as this, with the sentiment of which we are in complete agreement.

W. C. D. W.

**Doncaster, L., M.A.** *Heredity in the Light of Recent Research.* Cambridge University Press; 1910; pp. vii. and 140; price 1s. net.

THE relation between Heredity and Variation presents something of a paradox. Variation implies incomplete and imperfect inheritance, for if the resemblance between parent and child were complete and perfect there could be no variation. Yet if there were no variation there could be no inheritance or at any rate no possibility of recognising it. The study of inheritance is the study of the inheritance of variations, so that any logically arranged treatise on heredity must begin with the consideration of variation. This order has been observed by Mr. Doncaster, who attacks the question of variation immediately after a short introductory chapter in which the problems of inheritance are defined and their bearings on the theory of evolution and on social questions are indicated. He describes different types of variation—continuous and discontinuous—the statistical method of studying and measuring variability, and discusses its causes and the action of the environment on the body and germ cells. Chapter IV. deals with the biometrical study of inheritance; a method of measuring the correlation between father and son with regard to such a character as stature is briefly described and Galton's Law of Ancestral Inheritance is discussed. Mendelism forms the subject-matter of Chapters V. and VI. In Chapter VII. some disputed questions are discussed. These include some objections to the universal applicability of the Mendelian theory and the ever-present problem of the inheritance or non-inheritance of acquired characters. With regard to the latter the author sums up in the following words, with which the majority of biologists will agree: “On the whole, the hypothesis of the inheritance of acquired characters must be regarded as ‘not proven,’ and our increasing knowledge of the behaviour of germinal characters makes it improbable that it can be a factor of great importance in the constitution of the individual or to the course of evolution.” Telegony and the theory of maternal impressions are described and dismissed; they owe their origin to that ignorance of the nature of evidence which is perhaps the most widely diffused form of ignorance. The chapter on Heredity in Man should prove of especial interest to students of eugenics; it concludes the principal part of the work. Two appendices are added, the first an historical summary of theories of heredity and the second on the material basis of inheritance. There is also a useful list of literature, a sufficient glossary of technical terms and an index.

We can strongly recommend this work to everyone beginning the study of heredity and can safely assert that people familiar with the subject will derive benefit by reading it. Considering that almost all points of importance raised by recent research are adequately dealt with, the book is wonderfully short and easily followed. The print, paper and illustrations are also admirable.

E. H. J. S.

**Davenport, G. C. and C. B.** *Heredity of Skin Pigment in Man.* *American Naturalist*; 1910.

IN this paper Dr. Davenport and his wife discuss some data collected by them and bearing upon the question of the inheritance of skin pigmentation in whites and negroes. The whites were divided into three classes, brunet,